

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the specification.

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A linearly expandable router, comprising:
  - a first routing engine having input and output sides;
  - a second routing engine having input and output sides;
  - a third routing engine having input and output sides;
  - a first discrete link, said first discrete link coupling said input side of said first routing engine to said input side of said second routing engine;
  - a second discrete link, said second discrete link coupling said input side of said first routing engine to said input side of said third routing engine; and
  - a third discrete link, said third discrete link coupling said input side of said second routing engine to said input side of said third routing engine;wherein data flows in to the input sides of the first, second, and third routing engines and data flows out from the output sides of the first, second, and third routing engines; and
  - wherein the linearly expandable router is expanded by adding an additional routing engine having an input and output sides and by linking the input side of the additional routing engine to the input sides of the first, second, and third routing engines;
  - wherein said first, second and third routing engines each have N inputs to said input side thereof and M outputs from said output side thereof, and
  - wherein said linearly expandable router formed from said first, second and third routing engines having 3N inputs and 3M outputs.

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1 ~~[[2]]~~, wherein:

said first discrete link providing said N inputs to said first routing engine to said input side of said second routing engine as a first N additional inputs thereto and providing said N inputs to said second routing engine to said input side of said first routing engine as a first N additional inputs thereto;

said second discrete link providing said N inputs to said first routing engine to said input side of said third routing engine as a first N additional inputs thereto and providing said N inputs to said third routing engine to said input side of said first routing engine as a second N additional inputs thereto; and

said third discrete link providing said N inputs to said second routing engine to said input side of said third routing engine as a second N additional inputs thereto and providing said N inputs to said third routing engine to said input side of said second routing engine as a second N additional inputs thereto.

4. (Currently Amended) A linearly expandable router, ~~The apparatus of claim 1, and~~ further comprising:

a first routing engine having input and output sides;

a second routing engine having input and output sides;

a third routing engine having input and output sides;

a fourth routing engine having input and output sides;

a first discrete link, said first discrete link coupling said input side of said first routing engine to said input side of said second routing engine;

a second discrete link, said second discrete link coupling said input side of said first routing engine to said input side of said third routing engine;

a third discrete link, said third discrete link coupling said input side of said second routing engine to said input side of said third routing engine;

a fourth discrete link, said fourth discrete link coupling said input side of said first routing engine to said input side of said fourth routing engine;

a fifth discrete link, said fifth discrete link coupling said input side of said second routing engine to said input side of said fourth routing engine; and

a sixth discrete link, said sixth discrete link coupling said input side of said third routing engine to said input side of said fourth routing engine;

wherein data flows in to the input sides of the first, second, and third routing engines and data flows out from the output sides of the first, second, and third routing engines,

wherein the linearly expandable router is expanded by adding an additional routing engine having an input and output sides and by linking the input side of the additional routing engine to the input sides of the first, second, and third routing engines,

wherein said first, second, third and fourth routing engines have N inputs to said input side and M outputs from said output side, and

wherein said linearly expandable router formed from said first, second, third and fourth routing engines having 4N inputs and 4M outputs.

5. (Cancelled).

6. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 4 [[5]], wherein:

said first discrete link providing said N inputs to said first routing engine to said input side of said second routing engine as a first N additional inputs thereto and providing said N inputs to said second routing engine to said Input side of said first routing engine as a first N additional inputs thereto;

said second discrete link providing said N inputs to said first routing engine to said input side of said third routing engine as a first N additional inputs thereto and providing said N inputs to said third routing engine to said input side of said first routing engine as a second N additional inputs thereto;

said third discrete link providing said N inputs to said first routing engine to said input side of said fourth routing engine as a first N additional inputs thereto and providing said N

inputs to said fourth routing engine to said input side of said first routing engine as a third N additional inputs thereto;

said fourth discrete link providing said N inputs to said second routing engine to said input side of said third routing engine as a second N additional inputs thereto and providing said N inputs to said third routing engine to said input side of said second routing engine as a second N additional inputs thereto;

said fifth discrete link providing said N inputs to said second routing engine to said input side of said fourth routing engine as a second N additional inputs thereto and providing said N inputs to said fourth routing engine to said input side of said second routing engine as a third N additional inputs thereto; and

said sixth discrete link providing said N inputs to said third routing engine to said input side of said fourth routing engine as a third N additional inputs thereto and providing said N inputs to said fourth routing engine to said input side of said third routing engine as a third N additional inputs thereto.

7. (Currently Amended) A linearly expandable broadcast router, comprising:

at least three broadcast router components, each of said at least three broadcast router components is a discrete router having an input side and an output side and including a routing engine coupled between said input and output sides; and

means for coupling said at least three broadcast router components wherein said input side of each of said broadcast router component is connected, by a discrete link, to each and every one of the other said input sides of said broadcast router components;

wherein data flows in to the input sides of the first, second, and third broadcast router components and data flows out from the output sides of the first, second, and third broadcast router components, ~~;~~ and

wherein the linearly expandable router is expanded by adding an additional broadcast router component having an input and output sides and by linking the input side of the additional broadcast router component to the input sides of the first, second, and third broadcast router components,

wherein said input side of each of said at least three broadcast router components has N inputs and said output side of each of said at least three broadcast router components has M outputs, and

wherein said coupling means further comprises means for coupling said N inputs for each one of said at least three broadcast router components to said routing engine for the other ones of said at least three broadcast router components.

8-9. (Cancelled).

10. (Currently Amended) A method of constructing a linearly expandable broadcast router, comprising:

providing first, second and third routers, each router having input and output sides and each router including a routing engine coupled between said input and output sides;

coupling, using a first discrete link, said input side of said first router to said input side of said second router;

coupling, using a second discrete link, said input side of said first router to said input side of said third router; and

coupling, using a third discrete link, said input side of said second router to said input side of said third router;

wherein data flows in to the input sides of the first, second, and third routing engines and data flows out from the output sides of the first, second, and third routing engines, ~~and~~

wherein the linearly expandable router is expanded by adding an additional routing engine having an input and output sides and by linking the input side of the additional routing engine to the input sides of the first, second, and third routing engines,

wherein said first, second and third routing engines each have N inputs to said input side thereof and M outputs from said output side thereof, and

wherein said linearly expandable router formed from said first, second and third routing engines having 3N inputs and 3M outputs.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, and further comprising:  
providing a fourth router having input and output sides;  
coupling, using a fourth discrete link, said input side of said first router to said input side of said fourth router;  
coupling, using a fifth discrete link, said input side of said second router to said input side of said fourth router; and  
coupling, using a sixth discrete link, said input side of said third router to said input side of said fourth router.